



15¢

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COMIC BOOK  
COUNCIL

MAY  
NO. 221

# BATMAN



SEEK BATMAN OUT,  
MY PETS --  
AND DESTROY HIM!



TO BE DESTROYED BY THE VERY  
CREATURES OF THE NIGHT HE  
CHOSE TO EMULATE--BATS! IS  
THIS THE IRONIC FATE DECREED  
FOR THE CRUSADER WHO ADOPTED  
A BAT-DISGUISE TO STRIKE  
FEAR INTO OPPONENTS'  
HEARTS?

# A BAT-DEATH FOR BATMAN!"

5-325

BATMAN, No. 22, May, 1960. Published monthly, with the exception of April and October, by NATIONAL  
ENTERTAINMENT PUBLICATIONS, INC., and CO., Inc., 300 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. EDITORIAL, EXECUTIVE  
OFFICES: 300 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. In Canada: Canadian Copyright  
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Printed in U.S.A.

IT WAS JUST ANOTHER TRANQUIL MORNING ON THE  
JOHNE RIVER--A PATIENT FISHERMAN AND HIS  
SON WAITING THEIR FIRST BITE... AND THEN IT CAME...

MHAMMEL--WHAT HAVE  
I CAUGHT--?!

PULL  
IT IN--!

"INSTEAD, THE SURPRISED FISHERMAN HAD TANKED  
OVERBOARD..."

AH--SUCH  
STRENGTH!

"SUDENLY THE PLACID CURRENT TURNED  
INTO A BOILING, DEVOURING TURBULENCE..."

IT PULLED  
HIM IN!  
D-DEVOURING  
HIM...!

BUT THAT'S  
IMPOSSIBLE,  
HEALTH  
INSPECTOR  
ORDWEIN!  
PIRANHAS--  
IN THE  
RIVER?

HERR  
WAYNE--COMMON  
RIVER TROUT!  
JUST AS  
COMMON...

"AS THE BRACE OF LETHARIC OXEN THAT  
FARMER PLATT WAS WATERING ONE MORNING..."



"...AND WHO MOMENTS LATER TURNED INTO--  
KILLER BULLS!"



THESE ARE TWO OF MANY INCIDENTS WE CHECKED  
TOO BRUISING TO DETAIL--  
WHERE FORMERLY MEEK,  
TAME ANIMALS VIOLENTLY  
TURNED ON THEIR MASTERS!

--AND THIS  
MYSTERIOUS  
AILMENT IS  
NOT RABIES,  
HOOF-AND-  
MOUTH, NOR  
ANY OTHER  
DISEASE!

BUT IT'S  
TURNING "LAMBS"  
INTO "LAMBS"!  
WHY ARE YOU  
TELLING ME  
ALL THIS?

WITH BARON WILLI VAN  
RITTER, HEAD OF  
BODNER-FABRIK, LTD.  
PRECISELY WHY I HAVE  
TAKEN THE LIBERTY TO  
DETAIN YOU HERE IN  
CUSTOMS!

WE HOPE  
THAT AS  
GUEST OF  
THE BARON,  
YOU CAN  
DISCOVER WHAT  
WE HAVE BEEN  
UNABLE TO!



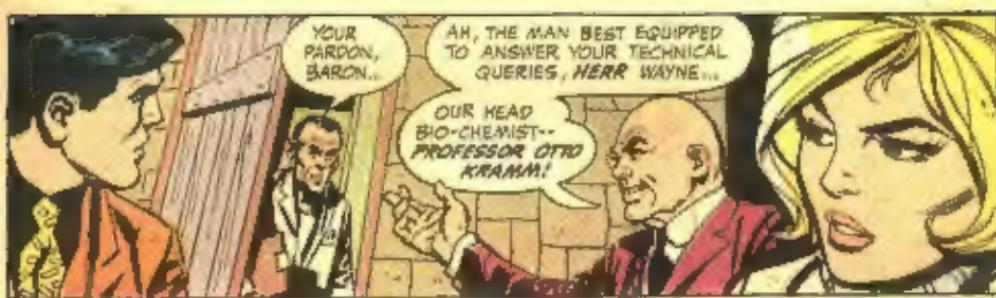
A SHORT TIME LATER, BRUCE WAYNE WAS CHUFFED ALOFT  
IN THE BARON'S HELICOPTER...

THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR  
HAS GOOD CAUSE TO BE  
WORRIED!

AN INVISIBLE, PERVERSIVE  
WATER POLLUTION, DEFYING  
CHEMICAL ANALYSIS... AND  
YET IT DOES NOT OCCUR  
IN THE RIVER ABOVE  
THE BARON'S  
CHEMICAL WORKS!







THAT WORLD-HUNGRY MANIAC,  
HITLER, SURE SET UP THINGS LIKE  
HE'D LIVE FOREVER!

PROBABLY  
HAD HIS  
SLAVE-  
CHEMISTS  
RESEARCHING  
BIOLOGICAL  
WEAPONS...

...TO BE PRODUCED IN HAWKING  
VATS LIKE THESE!

LUCKY  
WE GOT TO  
HIM FIRST!

HMM, LOOKS LIKE NOT  
EVERYBODY IS  
ASLEEP!

ACCORDING TO  
THE GROUND-  
PLAN, THAT'S THE  
RESEARCH LAB  
AHEAD!

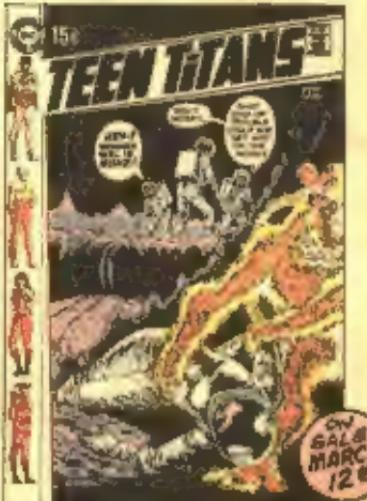
LAB-TEST ANIMALS  
SLEEPING PEACEFULLY--

WHAT'S THAT BEDLAM?  
SOUNDS LIKE--LIKE A RAGING  
LION AND A LAMB!

ROAR  
RAWR  
BA-A-  
BA-A!

STORY CONTINUES ON  
2nd PAGE FOLLOWING!

read...  
**D.C.'s BEST**



# A Bat-Death FOR BATMAN PART II

AS BATMAN'S QUICK EYES TRACE THE SOURCE OF THE BLOOD-CURLING SOUNDS TO A SECRET WALL-SECTION PARTLY A-JAR...



UNDER BATMAN'S INCREDULOUS EYES, THE TRANSFORMED "GENTLE LAMB" STRIKES AT ITS COVERING FOE WITH THE SHATTERING FORCE OF A BATTERING RAM...



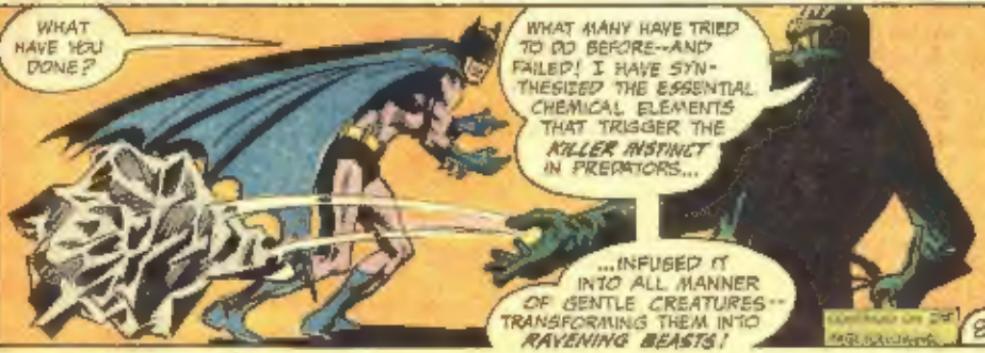
GREAT SCOTT! THE "KING OF BEASTS" DESTROYED BY A GENTLE LAMB!

JA, FLEPERMENSH! BUT ACH, A PITY I CANNOT TURN A PLANT-EATER INTO A MEAT-EATER! HERE, VICTORIOUS ONE, YOUR REWARD-- FRESH ALFALFA!



WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WHAT MANY HAVE TRIED TO DO BEFORE--AND FAILED! I HAVE SYNTHESIZED THE ESSENTIAL CHEMICAL ELEMENTS THAT TRIGGER THE KILLER INSTINCT IN PREDATORS...



...INFUSED IT INTO ALL MANNER OF GENTLE CREATURES-- TRANSFORMING THEM INTO RAVENING BEASTS!

AND--YOU USED THE RIVER  
AS YOUR TESTING  
GROUND?

NEN--THAT WAS AN  
UNFORTUNATE BY-  
PRODUCT OF MY LAB  
EXPERIMENTS HERE!

A CHANCE OVERFLOW OF  
THE "KILLER" SERUM  
THROUGH OUR DRAINAGE-  
SYSTEM INTO THE RIVER!  
BUT, EVEN IF THEY DISCOVER  
THE SOURCE...IT WILL BE  
TOO LATE!

NOT  
IF I  
STOP...

NOTHING CAN STOP US  
NOW! SEE--I HOLD  
YOU AT BAY!

WE WERE  
DEFEATED LAST  
TIME BECAUSE  
OUR ARMIES  
WERE MERELY  
MEN...



KRAAK

WITH THE WEAKNESSES OF  
MEN! FEAR--GUILT--ALL  
THE SO-CALLED ATTRI-  
BUTES OF "CIVILIZED" MEN!

BUT THIS TIME THEY WILL  
POSSESS NONE OF THESE!  
THEY WILL BE PRIMAL  
PREDATORS--  
WITH NO  
INSTINCT  
OTHER THAN  
TO KILL!  
KILL! KILL!

KRAAK

THEN YOUR  
FINAL PHASE  
IS TO ADMINISTER  
THIS MONSTROUS  
SERUM TO--  
HUMANITY!

YOU WOULD MAKE AN  
IDEAL SUBJECT, FLEDERMANN--  
BUT I CANNOT RISK IT!  
YOU MUST DIE... NOW!



I DON'T DIE THAT EASILY-

I DON'T INTEND TO KILL YOU! I AM TOO HUMANE WITH TOO MUCH TENDERNESS!

KTHONK

BUT "THEY" ARE NOT "THEY" HAVE NO SUCH WEAKNESS

AS THE LEVER IS THROWN, A CESSILE SCREEN SWINGS DOWN FOLLOWED BY THE EERIE WAIL OF COUNTLESS LEATHER-LIKE WINGS

HEH, THEY ARE NOT VAMPIRES ONLY COMMON CAVE-BATS

BUT NOW POSSESSING THE FEAR ENERGY - THE LIGHTNING ATTACK - OF HUNTER FALCONS!

I FEAR I DO NOT HAVE THE STOMACH TO WATCH THIS. BESIDES, I HAVE A MORE PRESSING APPOINTMENT



AS THE SECRET DOOR LAMS SHOT LEAVING A  
HOBLED BATMAN TO COPE WITH MOUNT ESS  
SELF-GUIDED MISSILE.

- SOY TO REGAIN  
MOBILITY I DON'T  
STAND A CHANCE

SQUEEEN

I COULD PLUNGE  
THE CAVE INTO  
CONCRETE DARKNESS  
BY SMASHING THAT  
BIG BATTALION  
THAT HAD A HAMMER  
WORSE

EVEN NOW THEIR  
WEAK EYES BLINDED BY THE  
LIGHT THEY'RE TERRIFIED  
IN THIS IT'S  
THEIR FRIGHTFUL  
SONAR!

BY EMITTING HIGH FREQUENCY  
SONAR, THEIR REVERSIBLE  
EARS PICK UP THE ECHO  
BOOM BIG BATTALION  
OF A E

LIKE RADAR USES  
HIGH FREQUENCY RADIO  
WAVES TO DETECT  
PLANES AND MISSILES

FRENZIEDLY THE CAPE CRUSADER FIGHTS  
AGAINST OVERWHELMING ODDS AS THE TINY  
FURRED MENACES nip AT HIM

UNSHIRT BE  
DESTROYED BY  
THE ERY  
CREATURES  
CAN HE  
ELATE BATS!

RADAR SONAR - THE SAME  
PRINCIPLE USING DIFFERENT  
WAVE LENGTHS FOR ECHO  
DETECTION

THAT'S MY  
ONLY HOPE  
IF IT WORKS

MENHOLE, EARL INSIDE THE LAB--THE MYSTERIOUS PADDED FIGURES PREPARES FOR HIS PRESENTS DATE...

"MY BELOVED WILL BE HERE AT ANY MOMENT! I MUST GET THE SERUM READY."

"OTTO--ARE YOU THERE? I BRING YOU OUR GUINEA PIGS!"

ZGA--ADORED ONE"

"IS THIS TO BE OUR FIRST PROTOTYPE SUPER-MENSCH? THIS FAWNING, CRINGING EXCUSE FOR A MAN?"

"WHAT BETTER CHOICE DEAR OTTO THAN MY HUSBAND'S VALET?"

TOGETHER OTTO, WE WILL BRING ABOUT A NEW WORLD--ONE THAT MY SPINELESS BARON WAS UNABLE TO ACCOMPLISH!

"AND THIS MIRROR-IMAGE OF HIM HAS 'VOLUNTEERED' FOR THE TRANSFORMATION. HE HAS MANY CRIMES TO SETTLE WITH WILL!"

"VICTORY IS AT HAND! TONIGHT MY HUSBAND--TOMORROW THE WORLD!"

"BARONESS, YOU JUST LOST YOUR TOMORROW--TODAY'S COOL IT OTTO. ONE TIME AROUND IS ENOUGH FOR YOUR KIND!"

"FLEDERMENSON?" BUT YOU SHOULD BE DEAD! THE KILLER-BATS.

"AH-HUN THEY WOULD HAVE, IF YOU HADN'T LEFT ME ONE POTENT WEAPON!"

"OTTO, YOU DUMMKOPF! NOW WHAT WILL DESTROY THIS COSTUMED MENACE?"

WE MUST HAVE A SUPER-  
CHAMPION TO DEFEND  
US. GIVE ME THAT  
SERUM

THEN LIKE AN AVENGING WALKYRIE, ILGA STRIKES...

ACH-H-H!  
ME-ILGA?

ZAP  
JA! OTTO.  
YOU SHALL BE MY  
CHAMPION!

AS THE KILLER SERUM EATS AWAY THE  
PROTECTIVE BARRIERS OF OTTO'S  
"CIVILIZED" CONSCIOUSNESS

ARH-H-H!  
RAHR-RR!

MOMENTARILY IGNORING THE THREAT OF BATMAN - THE  
TRANSFORMED OTTO...LIKE A BETRAYED PET, TURNS ON  
HIS FORMER MATE!

YOU-HURT  
ME ILGA I--  
DON'T LIKE  
THAT!

YARGH!  
AND NOW  
FLEDERMENSCH--

PHWOOP





HIS VISIONS UNLEASHED AS THE SECRET  
BEAR THATS BEG

EYE CARRIES HIM TO A FITTING JUDGMENT!



BEFORE I COULD MOVE  
TO STOP IT THEY  
DESTROYED EACH OTHER  
ARE YOU PROUD OF  
WHAT YOU ACCOM-  
PLISHED USA?

TOO LATE BE PROUD OF ANYTHING!  
I AM DYING

BUT - BEFORE  
I HOW DID  
YOU ESCAPE--  
KILLER-BABES?



"DURING WORLD  
WAR II, OUR  
AIRCRAFT  
CARRIED  
MORE PILOTS  
BY DROPPING  
THEIR  
ARMED  
ALEXANDER FOAM  
TENTS. THIS  
ECHOES I HAVE  
FOR AN  
AIR FORCE  
LESS EFFECTIVE!"

"I ACHIEVED THE SAME RESULTS WITH TORN UP  
PIECES OF FOOD-WRAPPING FOIL--THAT OTTO  
LEFT BEHIND! IN THE CONFUSION, I WAS FREE  
TO FIND A NARROW OPENING IN THE CAGE-ROOF...  
ENLARGED IT. THE REST YOU KNOW!"



I KNOW NOW  
WE NEVER COULD  
HAVE--BEATEN  
YOU



FOR THE SAME  
REASON THE "BEASTS"  
HAVE NEVER  
US--OUR STRENGTH  
IS IN OUR HUMANITY  
FOR OUR FELLOW-  
MEN!

THE  
END

STORY BY FRANK ROBBINS; ART BY IRY NOVICK & DICK GIORDANO

## WE'VE HIT THE BULLSEYE!



ON SALE  
FEB. 26



# The FBI CRIME LABORATORY

NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD ARE CONCENTRATED SO MANY SCIENTISTS AND SO MUCH EQUIPMENT ENGAGED IN SCIENTIFIC CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION AS IN THE 40,000 SQUARE FEET OF THE FBI LABORATORY ON THE 7TH FLOOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUILDING IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



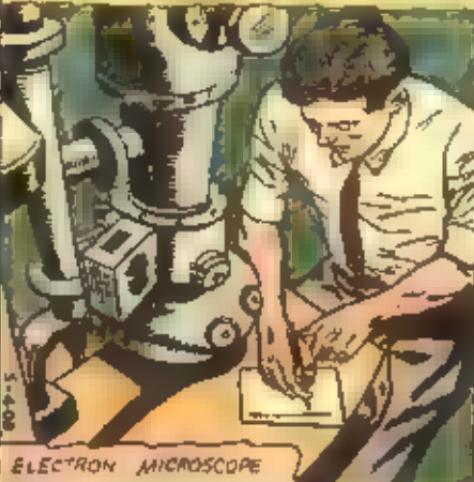
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

MORE THAN 200 TECHNICIANS, REPRESENTING PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, PORCH OVER EVIDENCE INCOPERATED AT THE SCENE OF A CRIME



FBI TECHNICIAN USES COMPARISON MICROSCOPE TO MATCH MARKINGS OF BULLET FROM SCENE OF CRIME WITH TEST BULLET FIRED FROM SUSPECT'S WEAPON

THE TOOLS USED BY THESE SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVES RANGE FROM A SMALL TWEEZER TO THE MIGHTY ELECTRON-MICROSCOPE, WHICH CAN MAGNIFY A TINY SPECK OF EVIDENCE MORE THAN 200,000 TIMES...



ELECTRON MICROSCOPE

DURING THE COURSE OF A SINGLE YEAR (1963), ABOUT 235,000 SEPARATE SCIENTIFIC EXAMINATIONS WERE PERFORMED, ONE FOURTH OF WHICH WERE DONE FREE OF CHARGE FOR AGENCIES OTHER THAN THE FBI (MOSLY FOR LOCAL POLICE FORCES.)



IN THE POLLUTARY UNIT OF THE FBI, SOIL IS REMOVED FROM A SUSPECT'S SHOES FOR MINERAL ANALYSIS.

# BATMAN

GOTHAM CITY  
ROSES AND  
THINS IN '75  
BET'S A  
MID-SUMMER  
HEAT WAVE  
A LITTLE  
THICKEN THE  
WATER NIGHT

"NON HARRY  
WE GOTTA  
MOVE"

THESE MEN THOUGHT THEY'VE SLEPTING FOR THEIR  
LIVES IN RECENT  
THE HEAT WAVES  
OF THIS SUMMER SEEM TO BE A SNIF



BUT  
SOMETHING  
ISN'T  
RIGHT  
IN  
THE  
CITY.  
DE  
MIGHT  
UNNATURAL  
HAD  
THEN  
...A

## HOT TIME IN GOTHAM TOWN TONIGHT!

STORY  
MIKE FREY  
ART  
JIM MURRAY  
COLORS  
JOHN BYRNE



FALSE ALARM  
BLAST I'M AT  
THAT'S SWIRLING  
IN THE LIGHTS  
I WANT TO  
START A RIOT BY  
HOLDING THEM  
ARRESTED AND IF  
WE'RE TRYING  
TO GET THEM ALL WE  
GET WITH IT BE A  
MISTAKE!  
JUST FORGET  
IT!"

"HOW CAN I FORGET?"  
HALF OUR CALLS THIS  
WEEK HAVE BEEN  
FAKES BY THESE  
JOKERS!"

"I COST US  
\$500 A RUN FOR  
NOTHING SO THE CITY  
COUNCIL SQUEAKS  
NO MONEY WHEN WE  
ASK FOR A PAY  
RAISE!"



JUST THEN-

TOLD BOB FROM  
A DRY CLEANER  
DID IT HUNTER  
OF ARTICLES  
AND CO. HEA

LARRY  
THE - IN  
HOME  
CORNER.

IF IT'S THOSE  
PUNKS AGAIN SO  
HELP ME

CUT IT OUT! HARRY W.  
BROTHER JUST GOT IN  
THE ARMY YESTERDAY &  
HE'S BEEN YAPPING ABOUT  
THE WAR. AND NOW I HAVE  
TO SUFFER THROUGH YOU!

HOPES THAT  
FALSE ALARMS DONT  
DELAY US TOO LONG  
TO GET T UNER  
CONTROL

THIS ONE'S  
FOR REAL

MY BABY SHES UP  
THERE TRAPPED  
HEAVEN HELP  
HER.

SET THE AERIAL  
LADDER GOING  
I GOTTA SET  
UP THERE

LOOK!



MIGHTY LUNGS PUMP OUT, IN, OUT,  
FORCING LIFE GIVING AIR INTO A  
TINY SMOKE FILLED CHEST

NOW  
THAT'S ALL  
MAN

YOU'RE ALIVE  
THANK GOD  
YOU'RE  
ALIVE!

HEY CLEVE WHERE  
YOU HEADING?

LEAVE  
ME  
ALONE

WHERE'S THE FIZZ  
MAN? IT HAS YOUR  
IDEA TO PULL THE  
BOY AND MARTH  
EM SCRAMBLED?

I DON'  
KNOW HE D MESS IT  
UP SO BAD!

WHAT IF  
HAT' REA  
IS LITTLE  
SISTER THAT D  
BEEN TRAPPED  
AND THE BAT  
MAN HAVIN'T BEEN  
ON THE SCENE?

WE BETTER TURN OUR  
SELVES IN. TAKE OUR  
PUNISHMENT. MR. FLIN  
THOSE FA. ALARMS

B.Y.A.P.R.I.T.E.  
T.F.T.K. SESSION  
B. THE A. TO  
154 - 2 - 3 21  
STD. 41  
ANOTHER  
DIEGETE

THOSE ANIMALS! THEIR DELAY  
ALMOST KILLED THAT KID!  
WHY DOESN'T ADOLFO TEACH  
THEM ANY RESPECT?

KAN I AM  
GETTING TIRED  
OF HEARING  
YO RAP?

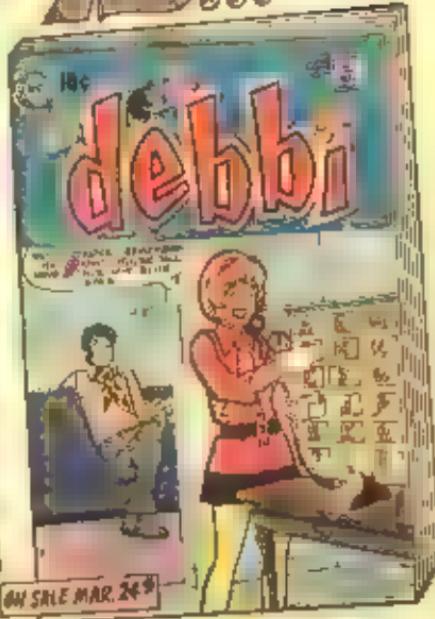
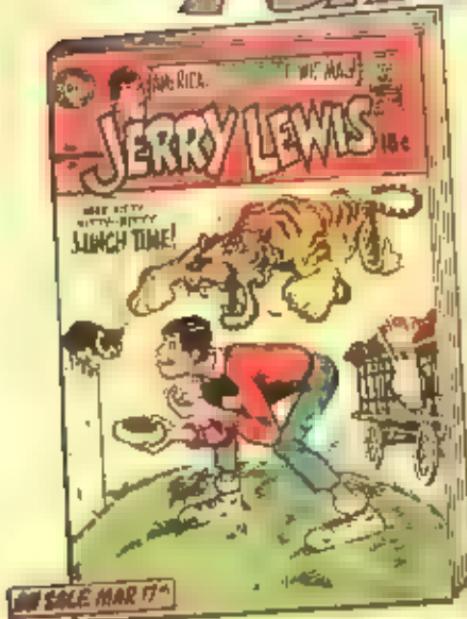
OKAY OKAY  
OLESS I'M A BIT  
SHORT TEMPERED  
TONIGHT



DETERMINED WILL AND INDIA  
TABLE COURAGE COMBINE WITH  
HODDERV HEMMERS AND THE  
BLAST SLOWLY FL-TIERS  
FRACASLES AND DIES



# FUN IS...



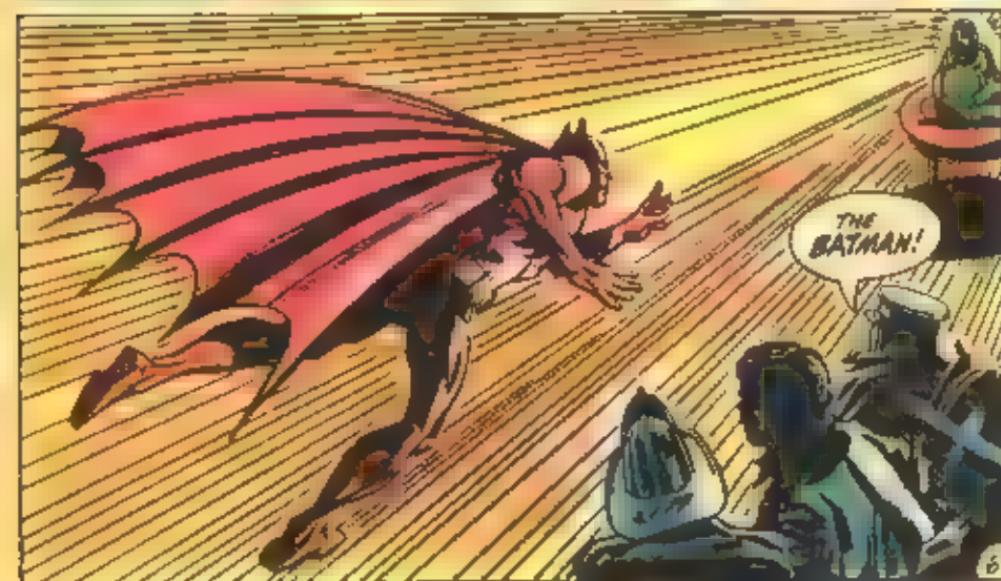
# PALISADES AMUSEMENT PARK N.J.

1/2 MILE SOUTH OF THE  
GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE



COMICS IN  
MAY THROUGH  
OCTOBER HAVE  
THE  
**FREE COUPON!**





HEROES OF STEEL FLY FEARLESSLY  
INTO THE BRINK OF THE UNKNOWN...

...AS THE IRON'S EYES STAB OUT  
WITH SUPERNATURAL FORCE  
AT STAR-LIKE INTENSITY...

...FIRST FIERY RED, THEN  
FLAMING YELLOW, FINALLY  
BLAZING BLUE-WHITE!



YET THE BATMAN GOES ON...





read...  
**D.C.'S BEST**



# LETTERS to the BATCAVE



**Dear Editor:**

Thirty years and the ever-changing world of *Batman* moves on...

Purposely, I refrained from listening to the fanatical grapevine on the "Big Change" due to comics' greatest hero. I wanted no hint as to how the stories and/or art would change. For when the December 1969 *Batman* appeared I wanted to see and read a fresh, new story without coming to some prior conclusion.

Thus the cover of this issue was a true masterpiece: *No Robin; a weeping Alfred; a grim, determined Batman*. That dynamic drawing of *Batman* by Neal Adams told me the editors at National were thrusting ahead with a bold, new presentation.

Opening the cover to page one—I received my first feeling of satisfaction. The team of Navick-Glorioso was handling the art. This is undoubtedly the best duo that ever rendered a *Batman* adventure. Surewise, Frank Robbins is the heart of the modern *Batman*. With this in mind, I entered into "One Bullet Too Many" eager to see if this was the end, or the beginning of *Batman*.

Twenty-three pages later I was relieved that the new editorial policy was never near the radical "Death of Alfred" type of story. Yet there was a vast departure from the *Batman & Robin* team I've loved so long. But anyone reading *Batman* in the last two years or so has seen the slow change taking place. *Robin* was out. *Batman* was a crime-fighter, a character of some realism, not a cardboard fighter of costumed clowns.

Finally, Bruce Wayne is a living part of the *Batman* saga. Having him set up the *Victims, Inc.* Program is a most commendable venture on behalf of the Wayne Foundation. To think that all these years there has existed the great many-line possibilities of such an organization, to only now be brought into focus! The use of *Batman* thinking, superimposed with, or behind, Bruce Wayne in a panel lets the reader know *Batman* is there—even though he's not in costume.

It's been a long time since *Batman* stopped a bullet, and the one fault with the story was *Batman's* ineptness with the single villain. However, stopping the bullet was necessary to the story. But I remind myself with panel 2, page 8 as Bruce states: "All big ambitious programs start small..." Thus, as the new cases tally up in the *Batman* casebook, I'm convinced *Batman's* career has really only begun.

—BILL J. WHITE Columbia, Mo.

*It is only fitting that the name of "Bill" White, editor-publisher of *Batmania*, be signed to the lead-off letter of comment on the "Big Change in *Batman*!" The mail ran about 70% in favor, 20% disapproved, and 10% had both good-and-bad things to say about it.—Editor!*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dear Editor:**

Comic magazine editors must be a rare breed. Any one who can entice I-don't-know-how-many fans with little subtle reminders ("The Big Change is coming in

*Batman! You've got to see it to believe it!") and then give us a perfectly mediocre mag like *Batman* #217, has to be!*

"One Bullet too Many" had one flaw too many—the biggest of which was that not one "change" scene as a surprise. *Robin's* departure was previewed in the November *Detective Comics*, so that didn't come as a surprise; after all, a 10-year-old kid sidekick has to go to college sometime! It was a good move, yes, but not earth-shaking enough to be called a "Big Change".

The phasing-out of *Wayne Manor*, the *Batcave*, the *Batmobile*, etc., was expected—things like that always seem to accompany "loud farewells". It's an unwritten rule in comicdom that whenever a super-hero loses his kid partner, he goes into a fit of nostalgia and depression, and promptly decides to cut all ties with the past—to "start a new life"! And, who's to say *Batman* should be any different?

The Wayne Foundation's new role in *Batman's* life was unexpected, as was "Victims, Inc."; but that doesn't necessarily make it a good move. While the idea of the *Batman* prowling at night is noteworthy, and of Bruce Wayne operating in the daytime equally good, I can't say I like the connection between *Batman* and Bruce: "I have this friend who just happens to be a superhero, and..." Come on, now! That went out with George Reeves' Clark Kent/Superman explanation! *Batman* should be more at home with the night, not friendly with anyone to any extent, and generally the *Batman* of 1939-1940. But then, mine is a lost and lonely voice...

So congratulations! This is another fine issue you've given us into!

—ALAN BRENNERT, Haledon, N.J.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dear Editor:**

If you expect me to explode in a frenzy of either enthusiasm or disgust over *Batman* #217, I'm afraid I must disappoint you. Strangely, I took the whole thing quite calmly. In order to give an opinion of any value in this, perhaps the biggest thing ever to hit the *Batman* magazine, I cannot allow emotion to overpower me. Actually, I can neither say I liked it or disliked it. Let us say this—it interests me!

Basically, "One Bullet too Many" was masterfully written, as befits a Robbins script. He obviously gave the details of the plot a lot of thought before he committed them to paper and typewriter ink. Some of them have possibilities, while some I feel to be questionable as to their reason or existence.

There is the matter of *Robin's* elimination from the team, due to the graduation and enrollment in college of Dick Grayson. I like the idea somehow, but I am unsure as to why the decision was made to oust him. It does fit well with further developments, such as Bruce Wayne's residency in the city. This makes sense, for what better place for a crime-fighter to reside than in the heart of the very activities he has vowed to quell? But though he no longer has access to the *Batcave*, why must it cease to function alto-

ether? There will come many a time when his crime-filers that have pulled him out of a thousand sticky situations will be needed to yank him out of another one. I concede the value of his ultra-quick wits, but it strikes me as kind of conceited to think he can do everything himself.

—GARY SKINNER, Columbus, Ohio

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor:

What are the elements that make up *Batman*?

First, he is Bruce Wayne, a lonely man who lost his parents in his youth, who remains unmarried, who has only two true friends in the world; a compassionate man who understands the suffering of others through his own sufferings; a man of enormous strength of will, who has found this strength in trying to help others.

Second, he is a detective, with an ever-alert mind, always asking, searching, probing any detail for the possibility of a clue, a tool to use against his prey.

Third, he is a creature of the night; he is a figure of mystery who lures out all criminals on their own grounds of fear and darkness—but with the strength of justice always behind him.

These elements, of course, have always been *Batman's* basic constitution. But somehow, over the years, *Batman* slipped out of his heritage and into the rank of super-heroes—those characters whose identities are not their human qualities, but their super-powers.

Finally, after years of searching for a new identity for *Batman*, we find again his original identity: one man—a fiercely aggressive individual, but one man none the less—devoting his entire being to others, that they make escape the sadness he has known.

I raise my hat to those gentlemen behind *Batman #217*; for this issue will surely become a classic that will change the course of comic magazines. *Batman* has finally been raised from the numberless ranks of super-heroes to the singular rank of hero. May he retain this position.

—EDWARD BRODERICK, Arlington Hts., Ill.

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Dear Editor:

What are you doing? It took *Batman* about 26 years, exactly January 12th, 1966 (three historic years before *Broadway Joe* pitched the Jets to a 16-7 Super Bowl win) to win the fame it deserved. Then what do you do—destroy an image! Okay, so Dickie boy flew off to college; that's no reason to take away the *Batcave*, *Wayne Manor*, and the *Batmobile*! Okay, so maybe *Batman* finally discovered that the "sophisticated" criminal is dead—veto of *Batman's* old image must live.

—DANN JAMROSE, Whiting, Ind.

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Dear Editor:

To quote the man from "Laugh-In": "Very interesting."

And by that I mean *Batman #217*.

So you've finally gotten rid of *Robin*? Well, it's about time! I've been reading *Batman* for about 10 years and have never felt that *Robin* belonged with *Batman*. Besides, junior partners are a hold-over from the '40's and '50's. I'm glad to see that after 15 years of foot-dragging you have followed the fashion.

There was another interesting aspect about this issue: that being a job for *Bruce Wayne* after 20 years is a lousy idea.

Also—please eliminate completely the super-villains such as *Joker*, *Penguin*, *Scarocrow*.

Finally—you're a BIG HIT in the barracks here at the Naval Hospital Corps School.

—DAVID COX, Great Lakes, Ill.

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Dear Editor:

Having the Dynamic Duo separated is like having Popeye stop eating spinach. Will the *Tonk Wonder* and the *Caped Crusader* get back together again? Man, I hope so!

—DONNIE PITCHFORD, Memphis, Tenn.

(*Batman* and Robin WILL be back together again—at least for the next issue—along with *Wayne Manor*, the *Batcave*, and *Batmobile*...all necessary ingredients to help solve the tantalizing puzzle of whether a certain member of a world-famous rock-and-roll group is dead or alive! —Editor)

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Dear Editor:

I predict that *Batman #217* will bring more mail than practically any other *Batman* comic ever printed. I salute you for daring to make such a long-needed change. I won't scream and yell that it was the best *Batman* tale I ever read. It might have been at that, but I am one who likes to look at things calmly. Dick's graduation from high school to go to college was something I've been waiting for quite awhile now. I believe this will increase the popularity of *Batman* and *Robin*. Bruce and Alfred moving into the city was unexpected and pleasing. However, I believe the *Batmobile* should be kept close by—for emergencies and for going to JLA cases. I approve of the change 100%.

—ROGER SCHOOLCRAFT, Folkston, Ga.

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Dear Editor:

I'm going to miss it. The *Batcave*, that is. That immense, fantastic subterranean retreat of the *Batman* and *Robin*, reached only by a secret elevator and unattainable to gangsterdons-at-large. Housing the secret crime-filers and the blinking, buzzing computers...not to mention the sleek *Batplane*, the swift *Batboat* and the stream-lined *Batcopter*. And the *Batmobile*. That impressive, impregnable jet-turbine automobile with its batlights and batwings and its countless "new looks". I'm going to miss it.

Or am I? *Bruce Wayne* is now returning to the element that he should have been associated with all the time. Night in the big city. Ferreting out human vermin. Chasing down dark alleyways and onto slummy wharves. Appearing on a rooftop, silhouetted against a full moon, spreading the cape and "wings" of an immense, leathery bat. *Bruce Wayne*...fighting as much crime and injustice without costume as with it. The *Wayne Foundation*...noble organization for truth and righteousness the world over. The *Batman*...discarding his expensive and familiar bat-junk to fight crime bare-handed, with only "the clothes on his back and the wits in his head"! Ye Editor...discarding a familiar format for the *Real Old Look*, the one that super-villains wounded in the late '40's and '50's and a TV comedy program finally killed in the '60's. The *Batman*...the '70's. *Batman #217*...Magnificent! This letter...finished!

—STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich.

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Address communications to LETTERS TO THE BATCAVE, National Periodical Publications, 509 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.